



**Venice International University**  
**VIU Summer School | After Capitalism**  
**Micro and Macro-institutional Conditions of Transformation**

**2021 Online edition**

**May 21 Introductory session**

**June 14-18 Intensive week**

**Friday, May 21: 3:00-5:00 pm CEST (Central European Summer Time)**

3:00 - 3:30 pm General Introduction of the Program and the Faculty

3:30 - 4:15 pm Student participants introduce themselves in 3 minutes max. (no ppt)

4:15 - 4:45 pm

**Giovanni Favero**, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

**Before Capitalism: Dealing with Accounting Fraud in Eighteenth-Century Venice.**

Virtually welcoming the students and faculty of the summer school in Venice, this session reverts the critical perspective on capitalism and its transformations looking back at its origins. Hindsight on business and the economy before the full expansion of capitalism somehow makes us able to put it into brackets and helps us to imagine what comes after. It is the case with accounting fraud and bankruptcy.

In the Republic of Venice, where specific accounting regulations and standards were absent before the Napoleonic codification, the role of accounting in financial fraud is difficult to assess for historians. The testimonies of false accounting statements are in fact very rare, precisely because these were not regulated by the law. An exceptional source documenting accounting manipulation practices and their disclosure in the eighteenth century highlights that consequences of fraud at the time were quite unexpected for historians (Agostini, Cella and Favero, 2017: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1032373221989454>).

The story concerns the porcelain manufacturer brothers Geminiano and Vincenzo Cozzi, who got indebted with Bonaventura Marinoni. The latter forced them to enter into partnership with him in order to collect his credit from the company incomes, and entrusted an accountant, Giustino Pasquali, to assess their amount. Six years later, the company went bankrupt and the Inquisitore alle Arti discovered a recurring overstatement of the earnings. Yet the fraud disclosure did not lead to any serious sanction against the accountant nor the capitalist, who simply had the repayment of his former credit delayed. The main interest of the Venetian authorities was in fact the survival of a company that employed more than a hundred Venetians and substituted imported china in aristocratic salons (for a virtual visit: <https://rb.gy/hk2pox> or <https://rb.gy/owh3bq>).

This story suggests the opportunity to reinterpret the process of legislative definition of accounting fraud. Instead of being the result of a heartfelt demand for the regulation of accounting practices, it results rather an effect of the transformation of the very idea of justice, with a shift from the general interest to the guarantee of property rights. In the new regime, the rights of investors were given priority over those of other stakeholders. In the old regime, instead, the different rights that constituted property met multiple limits in the constraints imposed by the stratification of social and political hierarchies.

**June 14-18 - Intensive week schedule: 2:00 - 5:00 pm (CEST)**

*The end of the sessions could be extended, if necessary.*

During the Intensive week the Sessions are organized as follows:

- 90-minute presentation by professors;
- 5-minute break;
- 90-minute presentations of the research projects of participants: group discussions with 3/4 students per session and at least 2 professors. 30 minutes per student: 20-minute presentation and 10-minute discussion. No PowerPoint. All students attend.

### **Monday, June 14**

**Johanna Mair**, Hertie School of Governance / Stanford University

#### **Transformative Processes and Enabling Conditions**

In this session we put the spotlight on organizations that adopt alternative organizational forms and therefore are often considered as the hope to ensure diversity within capitalism. In our conversation we will not rest on discussing the specific form or non-conformist actions these organizations take on but rather examine enabling conditions for their emergence and how what they do triggers transformation. Using our readings as a starting point we will also revisit the potential of studying gradual processes of transformation that lead to new social orders. We will discuss theoretical opportunities and implications for research designs to push forward this line of inquiry.

[Professors attending students' presentations: Johanna Mair, Francesco Rullani, Francesco Zirpoli, plus others available]

### **Tuesday, June 15**

**Francesco Zirpoli/Francesco Rullani**, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

#### **The evolution of decision-making in global companies**

Decision makers are often "multiply embedded" in organizations, in places, in informal social networks, in more formal associations, and so on. Interdependent decisions and actions of multiple agents acting in a distributed environment are profoundly altering both decision-making and the strategy implementation processes in ways that demand some rethinking of the governance and management conceptual toolkit. Sociological and organization theories, including theories of organizational politics, social movements, relational embedding and cognitive framing will be presented, discussed and applied to understand the conditions under which firms confront with, and balance, environmental, social and governance decisions.

[Professors attending students' presentations: Guido Palazzo, Francesco Zirpoli, Francesco Rullani, plus others available]



### **Wednesday, June 16**

**Elisa Giuliani**, University of Pisa

#### **International business and human rights**

This session will discuss the link between business and human rights. Up to 10 years ago, the word “human rights” was rarely associated with “business”, while now human rights are becoming a core concept in the business & sustainability scholarship and practice. This lecture provides an overview of the theoretical lenses through which the business and human rights phenomenon can be understood and predicted. We will review theories applied in the past to explain criminal or corrupt behaviour at the organizational level and discuss the complex predictability scenarios of business-related human rights harm.

[Professors attending students’ presentations: Elisa Giuliani, Johanna Mair, Guido Palazzo, plus others available]

### **Thursday, June 17**

**Juliane Reinecke**, King’s Business School

#### **Taming Wicked Problems? Understanding the Evolution of Transnational Governance and Social Movement Dynamics**

This session will critically examine the role of private power in developing transnational governance solutions to wicked problems. Wicked problems are large scale social challenges caught in causal webs of interlinking variables spanning national boundaries that complicate both their diagnosis and prognosis, such as poverty, inequality, climate change, deforestation or conflict in global supply chains. To do so, we will focus on the political dynamics of how governance initiatives emerge and evolve out of conflicts between social movement actors and corporations. How do these dynamics shape definitions of who is responsible and what is sustainable or valuable? Given the multiplicity of private regulatory regimes, does the competition of social movement-led and industry-led initiatives lead to a race to the bottom or race to the top? Finally, we will discuss the implications of these types of governance dynamics to tame wicked problem.

[Professors attending students’ presentations: Elisa Giuliani, Reinecke Juliane, Francesco Zirpoli, plus others available]

### **Friday, June 18**

**Guido Palazzo**, University of Lausanne - HEC Lausanne

#### **Storytelling and societal change**

This session will discuss the impact on language, discourse and storytelling on human behaviour. How does the way we make sense of the world influence ethical and unethical decisions and how can we use the insights on the narrativity of human existence as a leverage for societal change?

[Professors attending students’ presentations: Giovanni Favero, Guido Palazzo, Juliane Reinecke, plus others available]